

RUINAS DAL CONVENTO DE LAS CAPUCHINAS

GEORGE SUCH

The Capuchina nuns slept here on wood beds
with straw pillows, sequestered from *el mundo*,

having come on a ship from Spain, bodies full
of bare desire, young and hungry for God.

Something human loves a cloister, nourishment
behind the walls, the way boundaries dissolve

in disciplines and rhythms shape the shadows,
a place where surrender and power caress.

The walls taper inside their cells, webs
of mortared brick, each room a sequence

in a circle, built around a central chamber
where twenty doorways open, as if *un ojo*

once watched all. I wonder if they returned
the gaze, if they saw as they were seen.

A bright green moss grows in the corners

Still now I hear the song she stirred in him—
My foot misses your foot stepping over,

feel the warm wind of her whisper.